

The Honorable Merrick B. Garland
Attorney General
U.S. Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20530-0001

March 1, 2022

Dear Mr. Garland,

We, 219 faculty members at Baylor College of Medicine, are sending this open letter to express our concerns about the U.S. Department of Justice's *China Initiative*. We adopt the September 8, 2021 [letter](#) signed by 177 Stanford faculty and January 10, 2022 [letter](#) signed by 192 Yale faculty with their permission because we completely agree with their assessment.

We acknowledge the importance to the United States of protecting both intellectual property and information that is essential to our national and economic security. We understand that concerns about Chinese government sanctioned activities including intellectual property theft and economic espionage are important to address. We believe, however, that the China Initiative has deviated significantly from its claimed mission: it is harming the United States' research and technology competitiveness and it is fueling biases that, in turn, raise concerns about racial profiling. The October 28, 2021 Science article (<https://www.science.org/content/article/two-surveys-document-harmful-impact-china-initiative-researchers>) documented the harmful impact of the China Initiative on researchers.

We therefore would like to suggest that you terminate the China Initiative and replace it with an appropriate response that avoids the flaws of this initiative.

More specifically, we believe the China Initiative suffers from the following fundamental flaws:

First, the China Initiative disproportionately targets researchers of Chinese origin. Publicly available information indicates that investigations are often triggered not by any evidence of wrongdoing, but just because of a researcher's connections with China. (For example, see recent article and the research by Prof. Jenny Lee quoted therein. ref: [Has the Hunt for Chinese Spies Become a Witch Hunt?](#), Karin Fischer, Chronicle of Higher Education, August 11, 2021). In many cases the federal response seems disproportionate and inappropriate. In some cases, federal agents associated with the China Initiative have prosecuted researchers without solid evidence. Moreover, racial profiling – even when undertaken in pursuit of justice – is inconsistent with both U.S. law and the principles underlying our society. Moreover, these actions do not just affect the prosecuted faculty but affect the many more university researchers who are targeted, investigated, and feel threatened by inquiries initiated without prior evidence of significant wrongdoing. Universities and research institutions are often pressured to investigate researchers who are singled out only because of their personal or professional connections with China. (For example, see the description

by Prof. Randy Katz, the Vice Chancellor for Research of the University of California Berkeley during a recent Congressional Roundtable available at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G24w7d2_owo)

Second, in most of the China Initiative cases involving academics, the alleged crime has nothing to do with scientific espionage or intellectual property theft. Most prosecutions are for misconduct such as failure to disclose foreign appointments or funding. While such problems should be addressed, they should not be confused with national security concerns. Due to the openness of scientific research in academia, it is not surprising that the China Initiative has not led to more espionage-related prosecutions. It is misleading to the public that such prosecutions on unrelated crimes are presented as efforts combating national security threats.

Third, the China Initiative is harming the U.S. science and technology enterprise and the future of the U.S. STEM workforce. Since World War II, the U.S. has benefited from an influx of many of the most talented scientists from around the world, including a large number from China. They have played a significant role in our success as a society. For example, a 2018 study by the American Society for Engineering Education reports that 28.4% of engineering faculty (and 31.5% of Assistant Professors) in the U.S. are Asian. In recent years, the China Initiative (and some other actions of the federal government) have created an increasingly hostile atmosphere for Chinese Americans, visitors, and immigrants of Chinese origin, which has already discouraged many scholars from coming to or staying in the U.S. This seriously hampers our efforts to recruit the best Chinese students and postdoctoral scholars.

The difference between the open fundamental research carried out at universities and more applied and proprietary industrial or military research in the commercial sector must be recognized. Many of our most challenging global problems, including climate change & sustainability and current & future pandemics, require international engagement. Without an open and inclusive environment that attracts the best talents in all areas, the United States cannot retain its world leading position in science and technology. In some China Initiative cases, normal academic activities that we all do, such as serving as referees and writing recommendation letters, are adduced as evidence of “extensive dealings with the PRC” (ref: <https://www.documentcloud.org/documents/20452311-gang-chen-federal-affidavit>). Such actions are based on a significant misunderstanding of how scientific research works. They are detrimental to international collaboration. Instead of protecting the national security of the U.S., we believe such actions harm the U.S.’s ability to innovate.

We strongly urge you to terminate the China Initiative and develop an alternative response to the challenges posed by our relations with the People’s Republic of China, one that avoids racial profiling and discouraging beneficial and important collaborations and influx of talented personnel.

Sincerely yours,

Concerned Baylor College of Medicine faculty members (signatory names listed in alphabetical order on the following pages)

First Name	Last Name	Title	Department/Center
Carl	Allen	Professor	Pediatrics
Joseph	Allen	Associate Professor	Pediatrics- Emergency Medicine
Christopher	Amos	Professor	Medicine and Head, Institute for Clinical and Translational Science
Ananth	Annapragada	Professor & vice-Chair for Research	Radiology, Ob/Gyn, Duncan Cancer Center
Alli	Antar	Assistant Professor	Pediatrics/CNRC
Meenakshi	Anurag	Assistant Professor	Medicine
Ben	Arenkiel	Professor	Molecular & Human Genetics
Rachel	Arey	Assistant Professor	Center for Precision Environmental Health, Molecular and Cellular Biology
Fida	Bacha	Associate Professor	Pediatrics-CNRC
Angela	Bachim	Assistant Professor	Pediatrics- Public Health Pediatrics
Carlos	Bacino	Professor	Molecular and Human Genetics
Igor	Bado	Instructor	Molecular and Cellular Biology
Ashok	Balasubramanyam	Professor	Medicine; Molecular and Cellular Biology
Alison	Bertuch	Professor	Pediatrics; Molecular and Human Genetics
Avni	Bhalakia	Assistant Professor	Academic General Pediatrics
Juan	Botas	Professor	Molecular and Human Genetics
Maria Elena	Bottazzi	Professor	Pediatric Tropical Medicine
Lisa	Bouchier-Hayes	Associate Professor	Pediatrics
Wen	Bu	Instructor	Molecular & Cellular Biology
Audrea	Burns	Associate Professor	Pediatrics- Academic General Pediatrics
Gordon	Catherine	Professor and Chair	Pediatrics
Pui-Kwong	Chan	Professor	Pharmacology and Chemical Biology
Eric	Chang	Asso. Prof	Molecular and Cellular Biology
Hsiao-Tuan	Chao	Assistant Professor	Molecular and Human Genetics, Pediatrics-Neurology, Neuroscience
Rui	Chen	Professor	Molecular and Human Genetics
Changyi	Chen	Professor	Surgery
Xi	Chen	Associate Professor	Molecular and Cellular Biology
Chonghui	Cheng	Professor	Breast Center, Molecular & Human Genetics
Chao	Cheng	Associate Professor	Medicine
Jizhong	Cheng	Associate Professor	Medicine
Corrie	Chumpitazi	Associate Professor	Pediatric Emergency Medicine
Cristian	Coarfa	Associate Professor	Molecular and Cellular Biology
Adam	Cohen	Assistant Professor	Pediatrics - Hospital Medicine
William	Craigen	Professor	Molecular and Human Genetics
Milenka	Cuevas Guaman	Assistant Professor	Pediatrics, Neonatology
Clifford	Dacso	Professor	Molecular and Cellular Biology, Medicine
Weiwei	Dang	Assistant Professor	Huffington Center on Aging, Molecular & Human Genetics
Gretchen	Darlington	Emeritus Professor	Pathology-Huffington Center on Aging

Rowley	David	Professor	Molecular and Cellular Biology
Nichole	Davis	Assistant Professor	Pediatric Emergency Medicine
Carla	Davis	Professor	Pediatrics-Immunology, Allergy and Retrovirology
Andrea	Dean	Assistant Professor	Pediatrics
Ben	Deneen	Professor	Neurosurgery
Bier	Dennis	Professor	Pediatrics-CNRC
Daniel	DeSalvo	Associate Professor	Pediatrics - Diabetes & Endocrinology
Andrew	DiNardo	Assistant professor	Global and Immigrant Health
Lawrence	Donehower	Professor	Molecular Virology and Microbiology
Bingning	Dong	Assistant Professor	Medicine
Gloria	Echeverria	Assistant Professor	Medicine and Molecular and Cellular Biology
Dean	Edwards	Professor	Molecular & Cellular Biology
Florent	Elefteriou	Professor	Molecular and Human Genetics, Orthopedic Surgery
Laura	Ellis	Assistant Professor	Molecular and Human Genetics
Nader	El-Mallawany	Assistant Professor	Pediatrics - Hematology & Oncology
Frugé	Ernest	Professor	Pediatrics-Hematology/Oncology; Center for Medical Ethics & Health Policy
Nicholas	Ettinger	Assistant Professor	Pediatric Critical Care Medicine
Harold	Farber	Professor	Pediatrics – Pediatric Pulmonology
Rachel	Fein	Assistant Professor	Pediatrics- Psychology
Susan	Fernbach	Assistant Professor	Molecular and Human Genetics
Milton	Finegold	Emeritus Professor	Pathology-Immunology
Richard	Finnell	Professor	Center for Precision Environmental Health
Glenna	Foight	Assistant Professor	Center for Cell and Gene Therapy, Mol and Cell Biology
Xiaoyong	Fu	Assistant Professor	Breast Center, Molecular & Cellular Biology
Fabrizio	Gabbiani	Professor	Neuroscience
Xia	Gao	Assistant Professor	Pediatrics-CNRC
Acharya	Ghanashyam	Associate Professor	Surgery
Margaret	Goodell	Professor and Chair	Molecular and Cellular Biology
Daniel	Gorelick	Associate Professor	Center for Precision Environmental Health, Molecular and Cellular Biology
Andrew	Groves	Professor	Neuroscience and Molecular and Human Genetics
Dongyin	Guan	Assistant Professor	Medicine; Molecular and Cellular Biology
Sanjiv	Harpavat	Associate Professor	Pediatrics, Gastroenterology, Hepatology, and Nutrition
Sean	Hartig	Associate Professor	Medicine; Molecular and Cellular Biology
Helen	Heslop	Professor and Director	Dan L Duncan Comprehensive Cancer Center
LaQuisa	Hill	Assistant Professor	Medicine; Center for Cell and Gene Therapy
Susan	Hilsenbeck	Professor	Medicine, Smith Breast Center, Duncan Cancer Center
Jimmy	Holder	Assistant Professor	Pediatrics, Neurology
Kyle	Hope	Clinical Instructor	Pediatrics - Cardiology
Valentina	Hoyos Velez	Assistant Professor	Center for Cell and Gene Therapy, Duncan Cancer Center

Shixia	Huang	Associate Professor	Molecular & Cellular Biology, Education, Innovation & Technology
Brandon	Hunter	Assistant Professor	Pediatric Critical Care Medicine
Hamed	Jafar-Nejad	Professor	Molecular and Human Genetics
Mills	Jason	Professor	Medicine; Pathology & Immunology; Molecular and Cellular Biology
Daoyun	Ji	Professor	Neuroscience
Xiaolong	Jiang	Assistant Professor	Neuroscience
Lubega	Joseph	Associate Professor	Pediatrics - Hematology/Oncology, Global Health
Lina	Karam	Associate Professor	Pediatrics-Gastroenterology Hepatology and Nutrition
Choel	Kim	Associate Professor	Pharmacology and Chemical Biology
Grace	Kim	Assistant Professor	Pediatric Diabetes and Endocrinology
Katherine	King	Associate Professor	Pediatrics-Infectious Diseases
Robin	Kochel	Associate Professor	Pediatrics-Psychology
Kian	Koh	Associate Professor	Center for Precision Environmental Health
Seema	Lalani	Professor	Molecular and Human Genetics
Brendan	Lee	Professor & Chair	Molecular and Human Genetics
Hyun Kyoung	Lee	Assistant Professor	Pediatrics
Delphine	Lee	Instructor	Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences
Yunping	Lei	Assistant Professor	Molecular & Cellular Biology
Katherine	Lemon	Associate Professor	Molecular Virology & Microbiology; Pediatrics - Infectious Diseases
Michael	Lewis	Professor	Molecular and Cellular Biology; Radiology
Yi	Li	Professor	Breast Center, Molecular & Cellular Biology, Molecular Virology and Microbiology
Hongjie	Li	Assistant Professor	Huffington Center on Aging, Molecular & Human Genetics
Nuo	Li	Assistant Professor	Neuroscience
Feng	Li	Associate Professor	Pathology and Immunology
Na	Li	Associate Professor	Medicine
Ang	Li	Assistant Professor	Medicine, Dan L Duncan Comprehensive Cancer Center
Lan	Liao	Assistant Professor	Molecular & Cellular Biology
Zhandong	Liu	Associate Professor	Computational and Integrative Biomedical Research Center, Pediatrics
Pengfei	Liu	Assistant Professor	Molecular and Human Genetics
Stacy	Lloyd	Instructor	Molecular and Cellular Biology
Laura	Loftis	Associate Professor	Pediatrics and Medical Ethics
Anna	Malovannaya	Assistant Professor	Biochemistry & Molecular Biology
Anna	Mandalakas	Professor	Pediatrics - Global and Immigrant Health
Laura	Masters	Assistant Professor	Pediatrics - Neurology
Matthew	McGinley	Assistant Professor	Neuroscience
Anthony	Means	Professor	Molecular and Cellular Biology
Leonid	Metelitsa	Professor	Pediatrics
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Sara	Nandiwada	Associate Professor	Pediatrics-Immunology, Allergy and Retrovirology
Trinh	Nguyen	Assistant Professor	Pediatrics-Hematology/Oncology
Roger	Nicome	Associate Professor	Pediatrics - Hospital Medicine
Teresia	O'Connor	Associate Professor	Pediatrics- Nutrition and Academic General Pediatrics
Bert	O'Malley	Professor	Molecular & Cellular Biology
Kent	Osborne	Professor	Dan L Duncan Comprehensive Cancer Center
Timothy	Palzkill	Professor & Chair	Pharmacology and Chemical Biology
Stephanie	Pangas	Associate Professor	Pathology & Immunology; Molecular & Cellular Biology
Donald	Parsons	Associate Professor	Pediatrics
Ankit	Patel	Assistant Professor	Neuroscience
Fred	Pereira	Associate Professor	Huffington Center on Aging, Molecular Cellular Biology, Otolaryngology-HNS
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Stacy	Pierson	Assistant Professor	Pediatrics - Pediatric Hospital Medicine
Xaq	Pitkow	Associate Professor	Neuroscience
Sharon	Plon	Professor	Pediatrics, Molecular and Human Genetics
Lisa	Pompeii	Professor	Pediatrics
Kriti	Puri	Assistant Professor	Pediatric Critical Care Medicine and Cardiology
Nagireddy	Putluri	Associate Professor	Molecular Cell Biology
Ricardo	Quinonez	Associate Professor	Pediatric Hospital Medicine
Carlos	Ramos	Professor	Medicine, Center for Cell and Gene Therapy
Matthew	Rasband	Professor	Neuroscience
Ram	Reddy	Professor	Pharmacology and Chemical Biology
Jacob	Reimer	Assistant Professor	Neuroscience
Melissa	Richard	Assistant Professor	Pediatrics
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Rachel	Schiff	Professor	Medicine and Molecular & Cellular Biology
Filiz	Seeborg	Associate Professor	Pediatrics- Allergy Immunology Retrovirology
Manish	Shah	Professor	Pediatrics, Division of Emergency Medicine
Jack	Sharp	Associate Professor	Pediatric Pulmonology
Gad	Shaulsky	Professor	Molecular and Human Genetics
Lanlan	Shen	Associate Professor	Pediatrics
Ying	Shen	Professor	Surgery

Hughes	Sheryl	Professor	Pediatrics-CNRC
Crystal	Shin	Assistant Professor	Surgery
David	Shine	Emeritus Professor	Neuroscience
Roy	Sillitoe	Associate Professor	Pathology and Immunology
Yongcheng	Song	Professor	Pharmacology and Chemical Biology
Adiaha	Spinks-Franklin	Associate Professor	Pediatrics–Developmental Pediatrics
Arun	Sreekumar	Professor	Molecular Cell Biology
Ulrich	Strych	Associate Professor	Tropical Medicine
Zheng	Sun	Associate Professor	Medicine; Molecular and Cellular Biology
Tao	Tan	Assistant Professor	Neuroscience
Jianrong	Tang	Associate Professor	Pediatrics
Hossein	Tcharmtchi	Professor	Pediatric Critical Care Medicine
Satid	Thammasitboon	Associate Professor	Pediatrics-Center for Research, Innovation and Scholarship in Medical Education
Cooper	Thomas	Professor	Pathology & Immunology; Molecular and Cellular Biology; Molecular Physiology & Biophysics
Lotze	Timothy	Professor	Pediatrics and Neurology
Qiang	Tong	Associate Professor	Pediatrics-CNRC
Mustafa	Tosur	Assistant Professor	Pediatrics - Diabetes and Endocrinology
Ming-Jer	Tsai	Distinguished Service Professor Emeritus	Molecular Cellular Biology
Alicia	Turner	Assistant Professor	Molecular and Human Genetics
Teri	Turner	Professor	Pediatrics - Academic General Pediatrics
Ignatia	Van den Veyver	Professor	Obstetrics and Gynecology, Molecular and Human Genetics
Koen	Venken	Assistant Professor	Biochemistry and Molecular Biology
Hugo	Villanueva	Instructor	Otolaryngology - HNS
Cheryl	Walker	Professor and Director	Center for Precision Environmental Health
Jin	Wang	Professor	Pharmacology and Chemical Biology
Meng	Wang	Professor	Huffington Center on Aging, Molecular & Human Genetics
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Lily	Wang	Lab Director	Advanced Technology Cores
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Robert	Waterland	Professor	Pediatrics - Nutrition
Laurel	Williams	Professor	Menninger Dept. Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences
John	Wilson	Distinguished Emeritus Professor	Biochemistry and Molecular Biology
Bogdan	Wlodarczyk	Associate Professor	Molecular and Cellular Biology
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Tao	Wu	Assistant Professor	Molecular and Human Genetics

Huaizhu	Wu	Associate Professor	Medicine
Joshua	Wythe	Associate Professor	Molecular Physiology and Biophysics
Fan	Xia	Associate Professor	Molecular and Human Genetics
Liang	Xie	Assistant Professor	Medicine
Yong	Xu	Professor	Pediatrics, Molecular and Cellular Biology
Jianming	Xu	Professor	Molecular and Cellular Biology
Mingshan	Xue	Assistant Professor	Neuroscience
Shinya	Yamamoto	Assistant Professor	Molecular and Human Genetics
Feng	Yang	Assistant Professor	Molecular and Cellular Biology
Jianhua	Yang	Associate Professor	Pediatrics
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Qizhi	Yao	Professor	Surgery
Jeffrey	Yau	Associate Professor	Neuroscience
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Prudowsky	Zachary	Assistant Professor	Pediatrics - Hematology/Oncology
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Ming	Zhang	Professor	Molecular and Cellular Biology
Chunchao	Zhang	Assistant Professor	Pediatrics
Lilei	Zhang	Assistant Professor	Molecular and Human Genetics
Hui	Zheng	Professor and Director	Huffington Center on Aging, Molecular & Human Genetics
Yingmin	Zhu	Assistant Professor	Molecular and Cellular Biology
Huda	Zoghbi	Distinguished Professor	Molecular and Human Genetics